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ABSTRACT

This teacher training module presents the Student Membership Snapshot (SMS) system, a problem solving approach for teachers responding to increasing student diversity. The first chapter describes student diversity in learning styles, curricular outcomes, and social connections. The next chapter details the three steps of the SMS process: observation, problem-finding, and problem-solving. Chapter 3 provides three examples showing how the SMS process can be used by a teaching team to problem-find and problem-solve around issues of students' learning styles, curricular outcomes, and social connectedness. Examples of completed forms useful in the process of profiling the student are provided. The final chapter offers thoughts to reflect on in the SMS process, including the view that accommodating diversity is more like a journey than an event and that the SMS process provides teachers with a guided way of discussing children together using shared language. (DB)

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ED 405 720

MODULE 4E

Student Membership Snapshots:

An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy

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MODULE 4E

Student Membership Snapshots:

An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy

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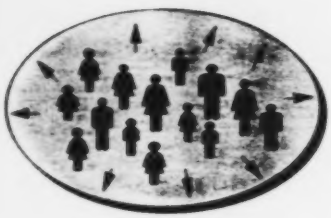
Student Membership Snapshots (SMS)



Changing School Communities and Increased Student Diversity

Things are changing rapidly in schools across the country for both adults and students. We see evidence of these changes everywhere, from the generation of learner outcomes to guide curricula restructuring, to the development of portfolios for authentic assessment of student learning, to the dizzying array of new strategies for implementing restructured curricula within classrooms. Change has become the byword for all members of the educational community, from state superintendents to maintenance personnel to presidential cabinet members.

"There are literally thousands of good ideas floating around for making classrooms more decent and dynamic. The problem is that ideas come at teachers ninety miles an hour..." (Ayers, 1993, p.133). Teachers are often left feeling pulled in many different directions attempting to select and implement the "most promising" new ideas from among the vast array of possibilities. This rapid pace of emerging ideas also presents an on-going challenge to rethink currently successful practices as we continually struggle to mesh the old with the new.

One of the most significant challenges currently facing classroom teachers is the increasing range of different and sometimes unusual learning abilities presented by students in today's public school classrooms. As educators involved in the many processes of school improve-

ment, we are challenged to build classroom communities responsive to the full range of human diversity, including ability, race, culture, learning style, various intelligences, personal preferences, socioeconomic class, and family and community priorities. For some of us, this diversity is represented by the students who learn differently from their classroom peers. Maybe because they like to be more active, or tend to rush through their work, or do better when they draw about things they know. For others the diversity is represented by students whose individual characteristics and learning styles are really very different. These more different students may need special supports or a variety of different teaching approaches. And for many of us, this wider range of diversity is represented by those students who simply seem to "stand out" from the group for one reason or another.

We designed the Student Membership Snapshot (SMS) to help you find and solve some of the problems in your school as you and your colleagues expand to incorporate wider student diversity. Our goal is to provide teachers with a tool for thinking about teaching and students' learning membership within diverse classroom communities in a critical, sustained way.

CLASSROOM DIVERSITY:

LEARNING STYLES, STUDENT OUTCOMES, AND SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Today, more and more classrooms are made up of students with more and more kinds of differences. Like this teacher, you might describe a wide range of students in your classroom:

> *My class was very diverse. I had four students one or more years below grade level in reading; two students with attention deficits and on medication; several students with specific learning disabilities or needing remediation, who were pulled at different times during the day; one student from the Ukraine who spoke no English; two students who spoke Spanish; three students from homes in which the parents were going through divorces; one student already involved with the juvenile court system; and four students attending classes for the gifted. (Rankin, et al., 1994, p. 236)*

The increasing social complexity and student diversity of today's classrooms have made us less and less confident as educators that learning one standard, "official" curriculum will help students achieve the kind of competence they need to lead satisfying and successful lives. In response, teachers at all levels are rethinking curriculum and teaching to provide learning supports to all students that will prepare them to access and participate in the benefits of their communities.

The difficulty in making this happen day to day in classrooms is that students bring all manner of differences to learning that teachers must take into consideration. These include different abilities, of course, but also different interests, different family life-styles and preferences about schools and learning. As we work to assure meaningful curriculum, effective teaching, and necessary supports within our classrooms, we often identify and trouble over certain students who seem to be "in but not of the class" (Ferguson, Willis et al., 1993, p. 20) for one reason or another.

ADAM—A STUDENT WITH DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES

Every student brings his or her own unique style, experiences, and strengths to the classroom. Teachers have been meeting the challenges of individualizing their lessons and activities since compulsory education widened the scope of student diversity for the first time around the turn of the last century. Still, some students stand out to their teachers as being not quite full learning members of the classroom community. And while all teachers adapt their lessons and activities as they teach, both to support and challenge their students, some students pose particular challenges to teachers' abilities. Like 6th grade teacher Tom Field's student, Adam:

> *He reads everything he sees...if only I could get him to write. Adam was reading two to three years above his grade level by the time he was six. And he has some identified processing difficulties. But I'll tell you, sometimes I think it's just pure stubbornness. I try to accommodate him by giving him oral tests or allowing him to record his project reports on tape. But, with our new integrated curriculum, I've moved towards lots more activities that incorporate language arts skills.*
>
> *Adam can write. I can tell that it doesn't come as easily for him as his reading abilities; he's lots more easily frustrated. And he is noticeably slower than most of his classmates. But so much in high school*

and college depends on written expression. And to top it off, other students are resenting the accommodations I'm already making. Some of them feel Adam is getting off easier.

Adam is one example of the increasing diversity present in today's classrooms. He is like many students who have different ways of thinking and knowing; some emphasize language, some motor learning, or even artistic intelligence - to name a few. Adam's learning style differences present particular challenges to Tom's integrated curricular approach emphasizing language expression.

RHONDA—A STUDENT WITH DIFFERENT CURRICULAR OUTCOMES

Some students bring very unique learning characteristics to the classroom. These students often seem set apart and immediately recognizable as different, even to casual observers. Not so much because of any impairment or disability they may have, but because of what, how, and with whom they are doing things in the classroom. Most teachers have not had very much experience teaching and supporting learning outcomes for these students. Kathy Roth, a third grade teacher, feels significantly challenged in her attempts to support the learning membership of Rhonda:

"Rhonda's a different child when she's with other kids", explains her mother. Everyone agrees that second grade was an enormously successful experience for her...socially. The teacher and instructional assistant worked to include her in every activity from group reading, to the play they put on demonstrating their learning about state history, to the class mural on ocean life. "We put her down on the floor with the other students and she added her strokes with theirs'. Rhonda was a part of everything they did", summed up the instructional assistant.

However, everyone also knows third grade is different. This year the class activities are much more independent and seat-work oriented. Third graders are expected to go beyond exploration and begin mastering factual information and study skills. And while Kathy, this year's teacher, admits that many children and parents find the transition difficult, she explains, "Even art gets pretty technical in third grade".

Rhonda, a student with significant disabilities, provides another example of the student diversity found in today's classrooms. The curricular goals and student outcomes she has been working on seem very different from those of other third graders. Kathy, as well as others on the teaching team, are struggling to accommodate Rhonda's unique learning outcomes within the study skill and independent work emphasis of the third grade curriculum. Beyond finding ways for her to follow classroom routines more or less like other students, the team faces the challenge of how to negotiate teaching.

JOSE—A STUDENT NEEDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

Our teaching efforts are most often successful with students who match our own personal styles. The more students differ from us culturally, ethnically, and socioeconomically, the more our social and learning styles are likely to differ (Sternberg, 1994). While public schools have traditionally been places of Caucasian traditions, middle-class values, and logical-deductive learning styles - the growing social complexity and diversity of our general population are changing these traditions.

In more and more classrooms the values, traditions, social practices, and/or learning styles of teachers and students are very different from those traditionally emphasized. Sometimes we teachers can find ourselves particularly challenged as we work to assure the social connectedness of some students.

Beth Mehan, a junior high school teacher, has one student she has troubled over for these reasons. Six weeks into the school year and she still doesn't feel she's "reached" Jose:

He actively resists every attempt I make to draw him into the discussion or activity. Jose will sit through an entire period content to read one of those pop music magazines he constantly carries around. He's not aggressive or acting out, mind you. In fact, he would be easy to simply overlook. And I think he would prefer it that way.

The few times I have insisted on his participation, however, his comments have been caustic - even rude. I hate to admit it but I'm not sure I could honestly say I like Jose. Behind that silence he just seems to resent everything I represent as teacher or authority figure.

Jose is a third, increasingly more common, example of the student diversity in classrooms. It's natural for us to think our students are more like us and each other than they really are (Sternberg, 1994). We often take for granted that their personal values and thinking styles are similar to our own. When confronted with these often mistaken assumptions and led to look further, these students' differences can seem like personal rejections. Some students stand out because they lack social connectedness within the classroom. They are real challenges to our efforts at creating "community" within our classrooms.

What Can Teachers Do?

In the face of todays' increasing classroom diversity, teachers are less and less confident that the traditional approaches to teaching and learning will help students achieve the kinds of competence they need for adult life. As educators, we are more concerned than ever that students use their learning in ways that make a difference in their lives outside of school. With this in mind, students such as Adam, Rhonda, and Jose present us with unique problems and opportunities. We are challenged to find ways that learning, participation, and membership can mean different things for very different students in the same learning situation.

These students, who stand out to us from time to time as somehow "in but not of" the group, also present us with an important choice. We can accept them as "painful facts of life" and attempt to work around them as we plan curricula and teaching. Or we can celebrate them as opportunities and seek them out as resources for tailoring our curricular and teaching strategies to stretch our learning communities and achieve wider student membership.

Designs for Expanded Curriculum and Teaching

Expanding our schools to incorporate wider student diversity makes possible an important shift in teachers' work. In the past, the focus of special educators' work has been on finding and trying to repair, or at least ameliorate, those aspects of students' learning that cause them to fall outside the norm so that they might once again become part of the "in group". One task for general educators has been to assist this agenda by identifying those students who do not seem to fit the insider group so that special educators can determine why, and try to change that designation.

The logic of including the whole range of student diversity within an expanded classroom frees both groups of teachers from the task of seeking out and naming student learning differences and deficits. Instead teachers can focus on creating and tailoring curricula and teaching so that schooling "works" for every student.

Experimenting with these kinds of curriculum and teaching reforms allows teachers to see the supports needed by students with official disabilities as differences of degree rather than type. Further tailoring the learning event for them might require different adjustments, or more supports than for some other students. The essential process, however, remains the same for all, achieving more, and more varied learning outcomes for all students. Fears of "watering down" the official curriculum only remain for those classrooms that have not responded to the need for more systemic curriculum and teaching reform. Classrooms and teachers seriously engaged in preparing students for the future have already begun expanding and enriching the curriculum to respond both to the demands for broader student outcomes and to the different interests, purposes and abilities of each student.

These changes in teachers' work, from a focus on student remediation to classroom practices, create a need for different teaching tools. We need now, more than ever, heuristic teaching tools that can be adopted and adapted to fit the complexity of each classroom and teacher while at the same time illustrating a common logic applicable across all of them. Without this clearer picture, encompassing both the wide-angle view of the teaching context and the close-up view of individual students' roles, our curricular decisions and instructional interactions can easily become reflexive, inconsistent, and shortsighted.

Addressing the learning needs of heterogeneous student groups requires designing and organizing more inclusive curriculum content, constructing more varied teaching experiences, and tailoring the recording and reporting of students' accomplishments . The Individually Tailored Learning System (ITES) (Ferguson, Ralph, Meyer, Willis, & Young, 1993) uses one such approach. The ITES process provides a framework for thinking about curricular decisions in terms of how teaching and learning might need to be enriched, expanded, adapted, overlapped, and embedded for ALL students. It in-

cludes a tailored curriculum decision-making framework that teachers can adopt and adapt to gather information about their students, plan curricula and teaching experiences, and record those decisions for everyone who might need or want to know about them.

STUDENT MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT:

AN ONGOING PROBLEM-SOLVING STRATEGY

Even with designs for expanded curriculum and heuristic teaching tools, some students remain identifiable as in need of additional supports. Due to their diverse learning styles, curricular outcomes, or social patterns certain students come to our attention. These students do not seem to be experiencing learning membership - having a place/role in both the social and learning aspects of classrooms. For these students, our practices seem to fall short of achieving full learning membership into the broader classroom community. In lots of classrooms, students such as Adam, Rhonda, and Jose as well as many others, will come to teachers' attention as individuals who remain outside the evolving community. Either sporadically or consistently, certain students gain notice as simply present rather than being full members of the class.

For these students teachers need a guide for seeing common classroom practices, not as wallpaper patterns, but rather as tentative decisions that are subject to continuous reflection and review (Barth, 1990). Working with teachers experiencing this need, we created the Student Membership Snapshot. It provides a way for teachers to puzzle through students' additional support needs in a way that attends to both the learning and social experiences of such students while also considering the wide-angle view of the teaching context. The following sections of this manual detail the observation, problem-finding, and problem-solving steps of the SMS.

2 *Student Membership Snapshots:* Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving

The Student Membership Snapshot (SMS) is designed to give you a quick picture of your classroom with particular focus on the fit of one student as a learning member. The idea is to provide a snapshot containing both the wide-angle view of the class in general and a close-up view of the student of interest. Used as a whole process, including the information generated through the accompanying reflective questions and guided brainstorming, the SMS provides a useful tool for (1) identifying the setting and student-specific issues at work and (2) planning for how these might be changed so that the student is truly a member of the classroom community.

The SMS is dedicated to both problem-finding and problem-solving. This is different from many other tools available for teachers. The SMS first guides you to find the problems. Then it assists you to structure solutions as you go along. And finally, the SMS helps you sustain your persistence and commitment to staying with those problems you find until you get somewhere.

THE SMS PROCESS IS DESIGNED TO:

- generate information on what's going on for the student you are concerned about;
- generate information on what's going on generally in class and with a comparison student;
- synthesize this information very quickly into a visual "snapshot" of the situation; and

- guide your problem finding and solving toward things you might do or change for the student, for the whole class, or for how the student and class interact.

THE STUDENT MEMBERSHIP SNAPSHOT:

A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW

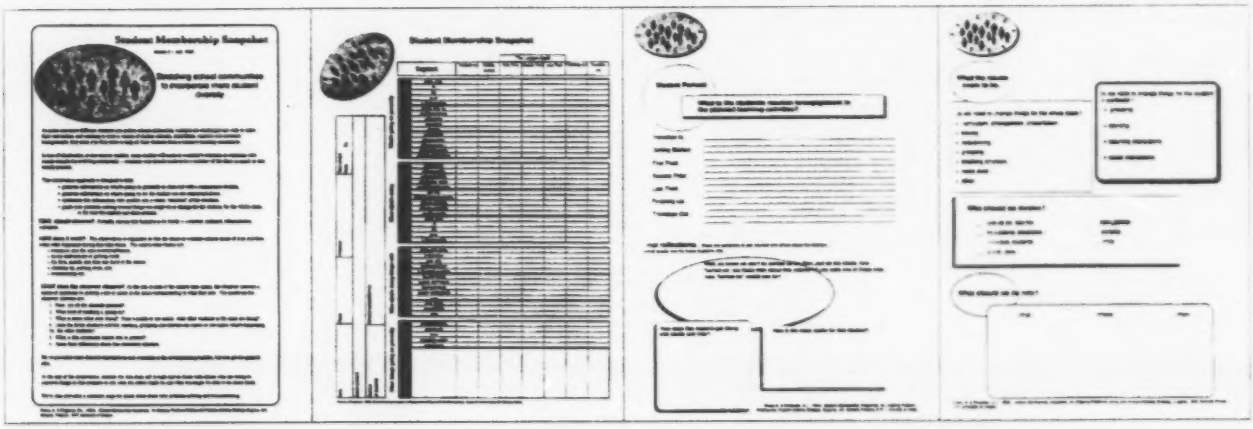
Below is an example of the actual Student Membership Snapshot.

Using the entire SMS process allows teachers and others who work with them to step back and see those students troubling them within the context of the whole teaching/learning process. It can be used as a guide for finding the classwide and student-specific issues affecting any student's full learning membership. The SMS also provides a strategy to organize adults for collaborative brainstorming and problem-solving.

HOW THE SMS PROCESS WORKS

The SMS process of problem-finding and problem-solving involves getting someone to observe while you teach or observing someone else teaching, reflecting on what was seen and heard, and brainstorming with others to identify the possible issues at work and to generate ideas for making changes.

A Quick Overview | *The Observation Format* | *The Reflective Questions* | *The Collaborative Brainstorming Guide*



HOW DOES IT WORK?

The SMS observation is organized so that the observer watches natural time spans of a classroom lesson/activity and then notes what happened during each time block. These natural time blocks are: transition into the activity/period/lesson, initial instructions or getting ready, the first, middle, and then last third of the lesson, cleaning up-putting away, and transitioning out.

WHO SHOULD OBSERVE?

We designed the SMS for use by anyone who happens to be handy at the time. Some ideas include a teacher, assistant, itinerant professional, administrator, or volunteer.

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WHAT DOES THE OBSERVER OBSERVE?

At the end of each of the natural time blocks, the person serving as observer answers a series of questions by putting a dot or a circle in the space best describing what they saw. The questions guiding observation are:

1. **How are all the students grouped?**
2. **What kind of teaching is going on?**
3. **What is some comparison peer doing? Does it match or not match what the other students in the class are doing?**
4. **Does the focus student's activity match or not match what's happening for other students?**
5. **How does the learning format for the student I'm interested in compare to the format of other students?**
6. **What is the grouping pattern for this student like?**
7. **What teaching and social interactions is the focus student engaged in and how do they compare to the interactions of others in the class?**
8. **What is this classroom lesson like in general?**

At the end of the activity/period/lesson, the observer connects the dots from left to right hand looks at any patterns developing around the focus questions.

WHAT ELSE?

The observation is followed by some guided reflection and thinking. The first question prompts the observer to consider the focus student's fit to the teaching/learning structure of each natural time block during the observation. Immediately after the activity/period/lesson, the observer considers this as well as the other three reflective questions about the setting's overall quality and the focus student's role.

AFTER THE OBSERVATION, THEN

WHAT?

Once the observation is completed and the reflective questions are considered, you should sit down with others who are trying to improve things in this situation. The group can review the SMS information individually prior to sitting down as a group or review the information together. While the group is together, they use the guided questions on the last page to discuss what the issues seem to be and to brainstorm what they might be able to do to change things for both the class as a whole and the student in particular.

THE SMS OBSERVATION— UP CLOSE

Most teachers and teaching teams find, that after a few guided uses, the observation section of the SMS process intuitively makes sense. We developed them over three years observing students in classrooms. However, at first, it is helpful to have more detailed descriptions of what to look for.

So we've provided expanded descriptions of what to notice at the end of each natural time span as you watch a classroom lesson or activity. Teachers we have worked with find it useful to spend a few minutes reviewing these expanded descriptions before observing. Then, while watching, you can use the SMS Reference Card (included) for quick review as needed.

WHAT'S GOING ON GENERALLY

This is a picture of what is going on in the classroom as a whole.

Grouping: How are the students in the class grouped?

- **whole class**—students working as single group, being taught as a whole unit.
- **> 5**—groups larger than 5
- **3 - 5**—groups of 3 to 5
- **pairs**—groups of two
- **1:1/individual**—students working individually with an adult and/or alone at desks

Teaching: What kind of teaching is going on, generally speaking?

- **guided teaching** —students are being actively guided through the class activity individually or in cooperative groups by adults. Adults are using a facilitative format rather than a directive format (see lead / demo).
- **lead/demonstrate**—students are being shown, as a group, how to perform or are being lead through the performance of an activity occurring at that moment or during this class period.
- **ask/answer**—students are being asked or being presented verbal answers to verbal questions by adults.
- **lecture/tell**—students are being presented information by adults verbally, visually, or with media.
- **observe/self-directed**—students are directing themselves through an activity with teacher at desk or moving around the room observing, evaluating, or providing feedback.

Peer Comparison: What is some other peer doing? Does it match or not match what the other students are doing?

- **active/match**—the peer is actively engaged in what is going on just like the rest of the group.
- **passive/match**—the peer is passive - maybe engaged, maybe not, but so is most everyone else.
- **active/not match**—the peer is actively engaged in the lesson/activity; but the rest of the class is pretty passive - maybe engaged, maybe not.
- **passive/not match** —the rest of the class is actively engaged in the lesson/activity; but the peer I'm watching is passive - maybe engaged, maybe not.
- **unengaged/disruptive**—the peer is clearly not engaged - acting "inappropriately" for the setting and activity. S/he "stands out" from the group.

WHAT S(HE)'S DOING

This is a picture of how the focus student is participating in the classroom.

Focus Student Activity: Is the student I'm interested in behaving similarly or differently from the rest of the students?

- **active/match**—the student is actively engaged in what is going on just like the rest of the group.
- **passive/match**—the student is passive - maybe engaged, maybe not but so is everyone else.
- **active/not match**—the student is actively engaged in the lesson/activity; but the rest of the class is pretty passive - maybe engaged, maybe not.
- **passive/not match**—the rest of the class is actively engaged in the lesson/activity; but the student I'm interested in is passive –maybe engaged, maybe not.
- **unengaged/disruptive**—the student is clearly not engaged,- acting "inappropriately for the setting/ activity. S/he "stands out" from the group.

Learning: How do the focus student's learning activities compare to the rest of the class? (Note: if activity has a combination of adapted materials or content and instruction etc. mark both descriptors for that time interval)

- **identical**—the student's activity has the same in outcomes, teaching, and content/materials as general class activity (i.e. student is involved in same history unit, using same worksheet and being instructed in same format as other students).
- **different content/materials**—the student's activity

has similar outcomes and teaching but different content or materials (i.e. student is involved in same addition following same teaching, but using a calculator, or completing even problems only).

- **different teaching**—the student's activity has similar content and materials but different teaching (i.e. student is involved in same health quiz ,using same test, but is having answers read to him).

- **different outcomes**—the student's activity uses similar materials and teaching, but the student's learning outcomes are entirely different (i.e. student is involved in measuring activity, using same worksheet and ruler, but is reading out the numbers pointed to on the ruler).

- **parallel activity**—the student is engaged in an isolated activity that does not match the format or instruction of the rest of the class (i.e. student is in 5th grade math class, working on addition worksheet with support staff while other students are being given a lecture on metric measure).

Grouping: How is the student I'm interested in grouped?

- **whole class**—working as a part of the general whole-class group, adult(s) is teaching students (including my focus student) as a whole class.

- **> 5**—working in a group larger than 5

- **3 - 5**—working in a group of three to five

- **pairs**—working in a group of two

- **1:1/independent**—working individually with assigned adult or independently

WHO S(HE)'S DOING THINGS WITH

This is the picture of who the focus student is interacting with and the format or quality of those interactions. (Note: For each of these categories, if more than one person provides instruction to or interacts with the student during a time interval, mark all descriptors that apply and circle the descriptor most prevalent).

Teaching Interactions: Who is teaching the focus student most of the time?

- **cooperative group**—student is completing activity or involved in activity as part of a cooperative group.

- **independent**—target student is working independently or individually as part of the whole classroom activity.

- **peer tutor**—an assigned peer is teaching or helping the student.

- **teacher/assistant**—classroom teacher or other adult member of this classroom is teaching.

- **1:1/support specialist**—assigned support staff who is not a member of this classroom is providing 1:1 instruction.

Student/Adult Interactions: What adults are interacting with the student and how do those interactions compare to those other students have with these same adults?

- **teacher/natural**—the student is involved in at least one interaction with the classroom teacher or assistant which is natural in respect to the situation (i.e. appropriate for his/her age, similar to adult interactions with other students in the class).

- **support staff/natural**—the student is involved in at least one interaction with a support staff person which is natural with respect to the situation (i.e. appropriate for his/her age, similar to adult interactions with other students in the class.)

- **teacher/"artificial"**—the student is involved in at least one interaction with the classroom teacher or aide which is negative or odd in some way (i.e. inappropriate for his/her age, different than adult interactions with other students in class.)

- **support staff/"artificial"**—the student is involved in at least one interaction with a support staff person which is negative or odd (i.e. inappropriate for his/her age, different than adult interactions with other students in the class.)

- **none for the time period** the student is involved in no direct interactions with adults during this time block.

Student/Peer Interactions: What other students does the focus student interact with and how appropriate are those interactions?

- **peer/natural**—the student is involved in at least one interaction with another peer which is natural with respect to the situation (i.e. similar to the interactions

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between other students in the class.)

- **peer/artificial**—the student is involved in at least one interaction with another peer which is negative or odd in some way (i.e. inappropriate for his/her age, different than interactions between other students in the class.)

- **none**—the student is involved in no interactions with other students during this time block.

Other Things Going On Generally

This is a picture of the classroom or activity in general that helps explain what is happening.

Setting Mood: What is the general mood and activity level of the classroom at this point?

- **action/discussion**—students are moving around the room and there is conversation or discussion.

- **action/quiet**—students are moving around the room, but generally the room is quiet.

- **mixed**—some students are seated and some are moving around, and/or some students are quiet and seated and some are in coversations or discussions

- **seated/discussion**—students are seated and there is coversation or discussion going on.

- **seated/quiet**—students are seated and the room is quiet.

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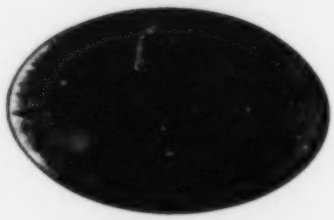
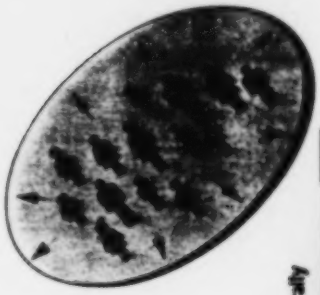
Three Examples of Supporting Membership



At its core, the SMS is a tool for guiding the observation of students in learning activities. Using the SMS, you examine the fit between your teaching practices and the learning style, curricular outcomes, and social connectedness of a particular student. The SMS also assists you to reflect on the situation, identify issues, and provide members of your teaching team with information to answer the question, "If we want to build a community of learners where all students are fully members, how might we proceed?".

We've included expanded examples from our collaborations with different teaching teams as they've worked to support the learning membership of students in their classrooms. These examples provide brief illustrations of how the SMS can be used to problem-find and problem-solve around issues of students' learning styles, curricular outcomes, and social connectedness.

At the conclusion, we have included some final thoughts and reflections for thinking about the possibilities of learning membership for all students. We hope these will provide a jumping off point for your own problem-finding and problem-solving.



Student Membership Snapshot

Date: 4/3/95 | Place: T.A.'s 6th grd block | Observer: Sue Ballinger | Time of obs: From: 9 To: 10

Adults present: Classroom Teacher, Educational Assistant

Number of students: 28 | General content/lesson: Written Lang. - Writers' Workshop

Other things going on generally | Who s/he's doing things with | What s/he's doing | What's going on generally

Segment	Transition in	Getting Started	The Lesson Itself: First Third	The Lesson Itself: Second Third	The Lesson Itself: Last Third	Finishing Up	Transition out
Peer Comments							
whole class							
>5							
3-5							
pairs							
1:1/independent							
guided teaching							
lead/demonstrate							
ask/answer							
lecture/tell							
observe							
active/match							
passive match							
active/not match							
passive/not match							
unengaged/disruptive							
Focus Stud Action							
active/match							
passive match							
active/not match							
passive/not match							
unengaged/disruptive							
Learning							
identical							
different content/materials							
different teaching							
different outcomes							
parallel activity							
Grouping							
whole class							
>5							
3-5							
pairs							
1:1/independent							
Training Interactions							
cooperative group							
independent							
peer tutor							
teacher/assistant							
1:1/support specialist							
teacher/natural							
support staff/natural							
teacher/artificial							
support staff/artificial							
none							
S Peer S Adult Peer Interac							
peer/natural							
peer/artificial							
none							
Setting mood							
action/discussion							
action/quiet							
mixed							
seated/discussion							
seated/quiet							
COMMENTS	SPED EA spent major part of the time with focus student	Transition in from computer lab	Assistant assigned to focus student. T gives directions	Student prompts students to participate in brainstorming	Assistant tried to shorten the assignment for A.	A. wrote a few words - then refused to cont.	While peers read progress in a log, A. goes back to editing paper	Cleans desk for next activity

Figure 1: Student Membership Snapshot

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SUPPORTING LEARNING MEMBERSHIP FOR SOMEONE WITH DIVERSE LEARNING STYLES

ADAM: ***He reads everything he sees... if only we could get him to write!***

Remember Adam? His teacher Tom has been troubling over Adam's avoidance of written expression. He has tried some accommodations like giving tests orally. Still, Tom is concerned. Now that he is using an integrated curricular approach that really emphasizes language arts, Adam's learning style differences are even more troubling. Adam's learning membership is becoming problematic.

Tom brought his concerns about Adam up during Monday's 6th grade team meeting. After listening to Tom's concerns, the teachers agreed that Adam's refusal of writing tasks would be a real issue as he went through junior high and high school. But the team decided they needed more information. So Tom asked one of the other 6th grade teachers to observe his Writer's Workshop lesson on Wednesday.

Sue Bellman, who has a student teacher this term, came to observe Tom's class using the SMS. Figure 1 is an example of what Sue recorded as she watched the Writer's Workshop lesson.

When the class comes in from the computer lab, Adam transitions in along with everyone else and gets his materials. As soon as Tom starts the lesson, pairing students up, he assigns the educational assistant to work directly with Adam. Adam starts fidgeting in his desk, cutting up paper. Adam starts participating when Tom calls the whole class together to brainstorm ideas for their poetry. For the rest of the lesson, students are directed to write individually, share their writing with their partner, then record their progress in their logs. Adam's action again drops to unengaged or passive. The SMS also shows that while other students stay in their partner groups, Tom has Adam work alone with the educational assistant. In fact, all of Adam's interactions - teaching, adult to student, and student to student drop when his assignment is changed.

While Sue is observing, she reflects on Adam's reaction to and participation in different aspects of Tom's lesson. Before she leaves Sue considers the other reflective questions on this part of the SMS. She records her thoughts about the overall quality of the setting and especially Adam's fit with the class and people. Figure 2 provides an example of Sue's reflections about the lesson.

Adam has some good role models for writing in Tom's class. The other students enjoy the writing format. Adam seems to want to work with his peers and resents being assigned to work with the educational assistant. However, he also has trouble beginning his pre-writing assignment independently.

Sue left the SMS with Tom. After reviewing the information, Tom decided he wanted assistance puzzling through potential issues and possible solutions. He brought the SMS to Friday's 6th grade team meeting.

Tom and Sue shared the SMS information with their team members. Using the last page of the SMS, the team began problem-solving. Figure 3 provides an example of their work.

The team began to brainstorm about possible changes for the whole class (e.g. breaking the writing portion of the lesson into shorter chunks) and Adam in particular (.e.g. having assistant float around the room, providing a variety of writing formats). Next they decided who to involve in making these changes.

Lastly, Tom decided where he wanted to start making changes. Steps for getting started were listed with some target dates. Tom asked to repeat the SMS in three weeks to see how things were going.

Student Portrait

A.R.

What is the student's reaction to/engagement in the planned learning activities?

Transition In	Class transitions in from computer lab - all rowdy, but know routine & expectations. Adam identical to peers
Getting Started	T. gives directions for poetry activity. Adam distracted,
First Third	goes through desk, cutting up papers with scissors
Second Third	Teacher presents examples of poetry, class brainstorms ideas. Adam participates after prompt from E.A.
Last Third	Students work indep. on prewriting. E.A modifies Adams task, Adam refuses to work
Finishing Up	Students share prewriting w/ partners. Adam with E.A. - hasn't produced anything
Transition Out	Students record daily progress in their folders, file them & clean-up. Adam distracted, not participating Adam did not complete activity, anxious to begin next activity

Final reflections... these are questions to ask yourself and others about the setting's overall quality and the focus student's role

Well, we know we can't be perfect all the time...but on the whole, how "turned on" are these kids about this activity? If you were one of these kids, how "turned on" would you be?

This poetry lesson was clearly defined & presented to the class with enthusiasm. The kids were interested & engaged.

How does this student get along with adults and kids?

Adam did not appreciate his one-on-one attention from the E.A. He wanted to work with peers, but was unwilling to contribute his own prewriting

How is the class useful for this student?

Good role modeling by peers for Adam to observe. He seemed to enjoy his teachers' poetry examples when he could focus on them

Figure 2: Student Portrait

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What the issues seem to be.

AR

Do we need to change things for the whole class?

- curriculum, arrangement, presentation
- pacing no problem
- sequencing maybe shorter "chunks" of the poetry form
- grouping - create 1 poem per pair of students
- teaching structure - guided teaching for students who want it
- noise level - no problem
- other - choice of using computers

Do we need to change things for the student in particular?

- grouping - place in pairs w/ appropriate peer
- learning - give option of using smaller chunks
- teaching interactions - assistant back-off, let teacher or peer assist
- social interactions - work in a pair, share in grps. of 4 for revisions

Who should we involve?

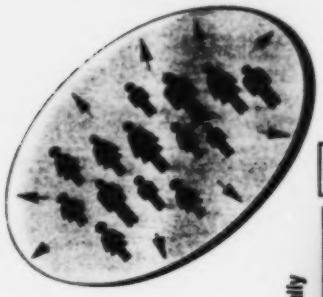
- ✓ special ed. teacher
- ✓ educational assistants
- __ individual students
- ✓ whole class
- __ case worker
- __ parents
- ✓ other - SLP to help preteach / reteach activity

What should we do now?

What	Where	When
Team meeting - Review learner choices for Writers' Workshop	4A	4/7
Class meeting - ask for student input & ideas. Incorporate computer lab time	classroom	next Monday

Rivers, E. & Ferguson, D.L. (1994). *Student Membership Snapshots:* An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy. Eugene, OR: Schools iProjects STP, University of Oregon.

Figure 3: What the Issues Seem To Be



Student Membership Snapshot

Date:	Place:	Observer:	Time of obs:
11/14/94	K. Hill's Rm. 8	Jean Sanders	From 1:30 To 2:20

Adults present: Classroom Teacher, SPED specialist EA Observer

Number of students:	General content/lesson:
26	Lang. Arts - Project Presentation (individual reports)

Segment	Transition in	Getting Started	The Lesson Itself: First Third	The Lesson Itself: Second Third	The Lesson Itself: Last Third	Finishing Up	Transition out
What's going on generally — Grouping / Training / Peer Comparison							
whole class							
>5							
3-5							
pairs							
1:1/independent							
guided teaching							
lead/demonstrate							
ask/answer							
lecture/tell							
observe							
active/match							
passive match							
active/not match							
passive/not match							
unengaged/disruptive							
What s(he)'s doing — Grouping / Learning / Focus Stud Action							
active/match							
passive match							
active/not match							
passive/not match							
unengaged/disruptive							
identical							
different content/materials							
different teaching							
different outcomes							
parrallel activity							
whole class							
>5							
3-5							
pairs							
1:1/independent							
Who s(he)'s doing things with — S Peer Inter / S Adult Inter / Teaching Interactions							
cooperative group							
independent							
peer tutor							
teacher/assistant							
1:1/support specialist							
teacher/natural							
support staff/natural							
teacher/artificial							
support staff/artificial							
none							
peer/natural							
peer/artificial							
none							
Other things going on generally — Comments / Setting/Mood							
action/discussion							
action/quiet							
mixed							
seated/discussion							
seated/quiet							
	SPED specialist seated next to R.'s chair waiting for her to transition in	from speech sits next to specialist	getting settled with help from peer	Peers listen to story on floor. R. removed from group & unengaged in activity provided by specialist	EA arrives, takes over for specialist	EA involves whole group while support is given to R.	kids ready to leave. No support needed

Rowe, L. & Ferguson, D. (1994). Student Membership Snapshot: An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy. Eugene, OR: Schools Projects, STP, University of Oregon

Figure 4: Student Membership Snapshot

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SUPPORTING LEARNING MEMBERSHIP FOR SOMEONE WITH DIFFERENT CURRICULAR OUTCOMES

RHONDA: ***Even art gets pretty technical in third grade***

Supporting Rhonda's membership in her classroom has become a frustrating issue for Kathy, her teacher. Rhonda's unique learning outcomes, need for support persons and occasional displays of disruptive behavior provide a constant challenge for this class of 26 third graders.

Kathy brought her frustrations to a weekly study team meeting consisting of Rhonda's special education caseworker, the school psychologist, 2 educational assistants, the speech-language pathologist and a visiting behavior consultant. After much discussion, Jean, the speech-pathologist, offered using the SMS to observe Rhonda's participation in Kathy's class during language arts later that week.

Rhonda, returning from a speech lesson comes into the class with Jean. Sandra, Rhonda's caseworker, has already arrived and is waiting to support her during the class language arts activity. Jean finds a place at a nearby table grouping to sit with students while recording her observations on an SMS. Figure 4 reflects the following information.

Rhonda, excited to be back among her peers at her table group, visits while the class gets ready to begin their activity. Sandra has brought a box of materials for Rhonda to work with and sits close to her chair. All students listen attentively while Kathy explains today's activity. Then she invites the class to join her on the floor to listen to a short story. Rhonda leaves her table group with a peer, receiving strict instructions from Sandra to sit QUIETLY while Kathy reads.

Rhonda begins to look around and becomes unengaged from the story activity. Sandra attempts to cue Rhonda from across the room unsuccessfully. Rhonda's inattention increases to the point of disrupting her neighbors. Sandra removes Rhonda from the group. She brings Rhonda back to the table to work on a different activity. Rhonda remains unengaged. Other students are distracted looking over to watch Sandra and Rhonda at the table.

Later, everyone returns to their table groups for listening and sharing individual projects. At this point Sandra is relieved by Denise, an educational assistant. Denise sits in a chair at Rhonda's table group. She quietly passes out blank paper and crayons to all the students at Rhonda's table and whispers to them to draw a picture of what the presenter is sharing. The students begin to draw as they continue to listen to the presentations. Denise interacts with the whole table group for the remainder of her support time. She asks questions of all the students at the end of each presentation. Her questions for Rhonda reflect academic areas that are specific to her individual curricular goals (e.g. counting, identification of colors, animals, sequencing events, etc.).

Figure 5 illustrates Jean's reflections on Rhonda's reactions to the activity, her surrounding environment and support. It allows Jean to consider the overall quality of this days' lesson.

Jean left the partially completed SMS with Kathy. Kathy brought this to the following week's study team meeting to brainstorm with others. Their problem solving is illustrated in Figure 6. The study team decided that all students might benefit if the support/teaching roles within the classroom were shared. This might benefit Rhonda by providing more direct guidance from Kathy. Information recorded on the SMS also suggested that students might benefit from a paper task to work on while they listen to lengthy oral presentations. Jean noted that Rhonda responded much more positively when she was involved in an identical activity within her table group. The team suggested the idea of teaching Rhonda's table group some peer teaching skills.

Kathy left the meeting with an agenda outlining the planned changes along with a listing of who would be involved.

What the issues seem to be.
RJ

Do we need to change things for the whole class?

- curriculum, arrangement, presentation O.K
- pacing O.K
- sequencing integrate student presentation with teacher's summary
- grouping - provide opportunities for large & small floor groupings
- teaching structure - All adults take turns interacting with kids
- noise level O.K.
- other Provide paper for written or pictoral notes

Do we need to change things for the student in particular?

- grouping provide small peer group for story time on floor
- learning relate individual goals to classroom activities
- teaching interactions adults share roles / trade-off
- social interactions provide hierarchy of prompts - gesture/signal or use peer

Who should we involve?

- ✓ special ed. teacher
- ✓ educational assistants
- _ individual students
- ✓ whole class
- _ case worker
- _
- ✓ other Speech teacher to share in classroom support w/ communication

What should we do now?

What	Where	When
Adults meet to discuss role sharing & floor group plan	Rm 11	11/16 Thur. (weekly planning time)
Kids meet to discuss seating & choices for quiet listening	Rm 12	Friday - circle meeting
Adults meet again to review progress	Rm 11	11/23 Thur. meeting

Rivers, E. & Ferguson, D.L. (1994). *Student Membership Snapshots:* An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy. Eugene, OR: Schools Projects STP, University of Oregon.

Figure 5: What the Issues Seem To Be

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Student Portrait

RJ

What is the student's reaction to/engagement in the planned learning activities?

Transition In	Entered quietly from speech, joined her table group
Getting Started	Peer helped get her seated. R. briefly engaged while teacher gave class directions
First Third	Couldn't sit still on floor with whole class, removed to table with specialist
Second Third	Unengaged in unrelated activity at table with specialist, loud / disruptive
Last Third	Assistant involved whole table group in paper task while listening - all kids engaged
Finishing Up	Whole group listens to teacher while she wraps up the activity
Transition Out	Support from peers at table group - transitions out independently

Final reflections... these are questions to ask yourself and others about the setting's overall quality and the focus student's role

Well, we know we can't be perfect all the time...but on the whole, how "turned on" are these kids about this activity? If you were one of these kids, how "turned on" would you be?

Most kids enjoyed hearing & seeing the wide variety of projects presented. It seemed to be difficult for several kids to sit quietly for the whole period of time

How does this student get along with adults and kids? Great with other kids when involved in "like" activities & invited to participate. Overstimulated in a large activity group. Resistant to adults at times

How is the class useful for this student?

Peers provided great role models for class presentations. The educational assistant provided the guidance needed for positive group interactions & high expectations

Rivers,E. & Ferguson, D.L. (1994). *Student Membership Snapshots*: An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy. Eugene, OR: Schools Projects-STP, University of Oregon.

Figure 6: Student Portrait

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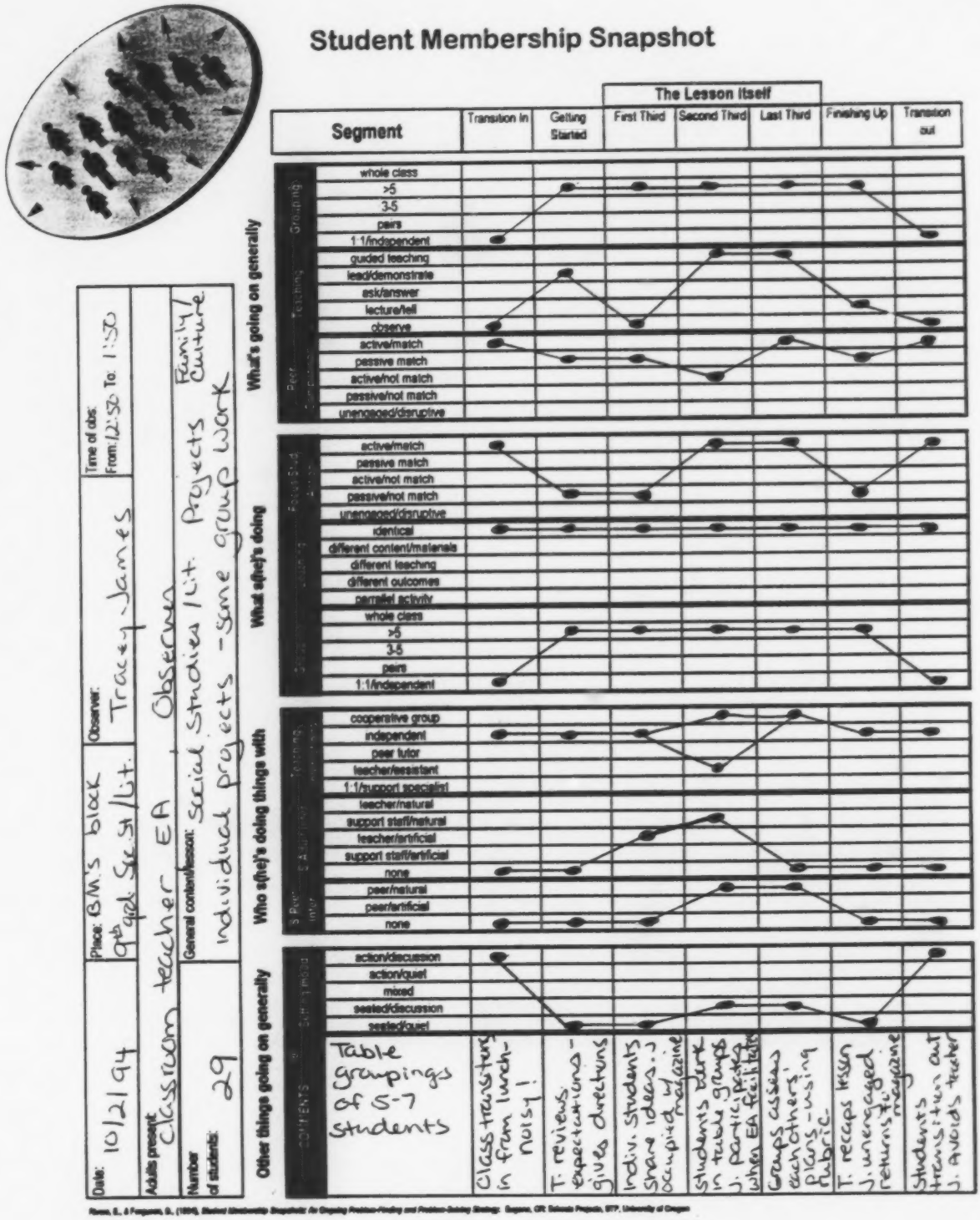
Student Membership Snapshot
Date: 10/21/94
Place: BM's block 9th grade Soc St/Lit.
Observer: Tracey James
Time of obs: From: 12:30 To: 1:30
Adults present: classroom teacher EA, Observer
Number of students: 29
General content/lesson: Social Studies/Lit. Projects Family/Culture individual projects - some group work
Other things going on generally
Who s/he's doing things with
What s/he's doing
What's going on generally
Segment
Transition In
Getting Started
The Lesson itself
First Third
Second Third
Last Third
Finishing Up
Transition out
Table groupings of 5-7 students
Class transitions in from lunch-noisy!
T. reviews expectations - gives directions
Indiv. students share ideas.. occupied by magazine
Students work in table groups - participants when EA facilitates
Groups discuss each others' plans - using rubric
T. recaps lesson - unengaged returns to magazine
Students transition out - avoids teacher

Figure 7: Student Membership Snapshot

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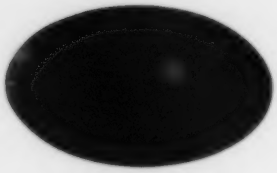

SUPPORTING LEARNING MEMBERSHIP FOR SOMEONE NEEDING SOCIAL CONNECTIONS

***JOSE:* He just doesn't seem to be connecting with other kids**

Jose has been quite a challenge for Beth Mehan. She has made several attempts to communicate with Jose about her frustration over his lack of participation and interaction during class. These exchanges have been brief and uncomfortable. Jose still isn't showing any indication of voluntarily interacting with other students or teachers. This especially worries Beth since collaboration and team work play a big part in her 9th grade intergrated social studies/literature class.

Beth asked her support team for suggestions. However not much was known about Jose. Even after six weeks of school, his previous academic records hadn't arrived. The team decided to have the schools' resource teacher come in the following week to observe Jose in Beth's class. Tracey James, the resource teacher, has occasionally team taught with Beth before, so she came Wednesday to interact with students and observe, recording information on the SMS. Figure 7 provides an example of Tracey's observations.

Jose comes into class from lunch break alone as groups of noisy 9th graders headed toward table groupings of 5-7 students. While Beth gets started explaining the day's activity, Jose quietly ignores her, pulling out a magazine. He continues to occupy himself with his magazine as individual students share project ideas with the class. When Jim, an educational assistant, steps in to facilitate interaction at Jose's table group; Jose puts down his magazine and listens. Jose continues to stay engaged with the five members at his table until Beth calls the class' attention to recap today's session. At this point, Jose turns his attention once again to his magazine. When the bell rings, he walks out of the room, carefully avoiding Beth.

Tracey was struck by Jose's willingness to participate with his table group after Jim's initial facilitation. She also noticed that Jose withdrew his attention whenever the class was being addressed as a whole group. She recorded her thoughts on the *Student Portrait* section of the SMS. (Figure 8).

Jose's willingness to interact within his group was encouraging. With Jim's help and modeling, the other students were able to draw Jose into their group conversation. He appeared interested in his peers' ideas, but had some difficulty forming questions about their projects. Tracey gave the SMS to Beth as she left the classroom. Beth was puzzled but encouraged by the information.

Beth asked to get together with Tracey and Jim to discuss Tracey's observations in hopes of finding some solutions to her classroom frustrations. The issues and ideas they identified are shown in Figure 9. They thought breaking groups into smaller units for some "mini tasks" might help facilitate communication and sharing for Jose and other students who seemed to find it more difficult working in larger groups.

Beth, Jim and Tracey also decided they would try rotating their roles within the classroom, giving each the opportunity to interact with students on a regular basis. Beth decided to provide all students with a framework for group participation (e.g. specific topics to cover, questions to ask, etc.) . The group also decided that more input for class activities could be obtained from students and their families to expand the class' cultural, ethic, socioeconomic, and personal traditions and interests. They noted this in the *Who Should We Involve* section.

Beth left the meeting with specific steps for getting started. She decided to use the SMS the following month to observe the class while Tracey taught.

Student Portrait

JG

What is the student's reaction to/engagement in the planned learning activities?

Transition In	Identical to peers except for lack of social interaction
Getting Started	Ignores teacher's directions for activity - takes out magazine.
First Third	Continues to be engaged in magazine while peers are note taking - is prompted by teacher
Second Third	Classroom Assistant facilitates group discussion Jose interacts with peers in group discussion
Last Third	Assistant fades support as students work together
Finishing Up	Jose ignores teacher as closing directions are given - goes back to magazine
Transition Out	Leaves class avoiding teacher

Final reflections... these are questions to ask yourself and others about the setting's overall quality and the focus student's role

Well, we know we can't be perfect all the time...but on the whole, how "turned on" are these kids about this activity? If you were one of these kids, how "turned on" would you be?

Kids who are "good listeners" were engaged in activity. Several kids seemed unsure of note taking task & their individual roles while working in groups

How does this student get along with adults and kids? Jose responded in a positive manner to classroom Assistant, but not his teacher. He worked well with his group when the interaction was facilitated by the assistant

How is the class useful for this student?

This class provided many opportunities for peer interaction. All students were invited to share cultural & family info.

Rivers,E. & Ferguson, D.L. (1994). *Student Membership Snapshots*: An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy. Eugene, OR: Schools Projects-STP, University of Oregon.

Figure 8: Student Portrait

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What the issues seem to be.
JG

Do we need to change things for the whole class?

- curriculum, arrangement, presentation provide more options for project presentation
- pacing O.K
- sequencing O.K
- grouping provide option of working in pairs on mini. tasks
- teaching structure Adults rotate roles
- noise level O.K
- other Provide framework/guide to facilitate group discussions

Do we need to change things for the student in particular?

- grouping give choice of smaller group - or let choose partner
- learning explain options for project presentation! Art / drama / music
- teaching interactions let J. choose who to seek assistance from
- social interactions Adapt group discussion guide

Who should we involve?

- ✓ special ed. teacher
- ✓ educational assistants
- __ individual students
- ✓ whole class
- __ case worker
- ✓ parents
- __ other

What should we do now?

What	Where	When
Special Ed. Teacher, EA & classroom Teacher rotate support - make plan	Rm 3	Thur. Block planning time
class meeting / ask input for a discussion guide	Rm 11	Friday morning
Teacher & EA prepare parent survey	Rm 3	Monday 2:45

Rivers, E. & Ferguson, D.L. (1994). *Student Membership Snapshots: An Ongoing Problem-Finding and Problem-Solving Strategy.* Eugene, OR: Schools Projects STP, University of Oregon.

Figure 9: What the Issues Seem To Be

4 *Student Membership:* Some final reflections

Things are changing rapidly in schools for both teachers and students. One of our biggest challenges as educators is supporting the full learning membership of the ever-increasing variety of students present in todays' schools. The Student Membership Snapshot is a tool assisting educators in this task - to find and solve some of the problems we face when we take on the challenge to expand our classroom communities and include wider student diversity.

We've included a few thoughts for further reflection and continued action to support students' full learning membership.

SOME THOUGHTS:

- Accommodating diversity and achieving learning membership for our students is more like a journey than an event. A sense of purpose is identified, considered, and continuously shaped and reshaped.
- School improvement is a problem-rich process. Coming to see these problems as our friends -opportunities for thoughtful observation and creative action is the goal. Success is not fewer problems but better solutions.
- The experience of making meaningful change may also heighten teachers' feelings of empowerment.
- Teachers currently have no guided way of discussing children together using a shared language
- "Good schools are always unique...do not follow a generic, one-size-fits-all approach to education, but rely instead on a community of people working together, figuring out how to solve problems and improve their school on a daily basis, then having the freedom to act on their conclusions." (Ayers, 1993, p.133)

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